



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. BJ 2015 - 1

BESE's DUTY TO UPHOLD THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM AND OFFER ALTERNATIVES TO THE PARCC TEST

- WHEREAS,** the Preamble to Article VIII (Education) of the Louisiana Constitution provides:
- The goal of the public educational system is to provide learning environments and experiences, at all stages of human development, that are humane, just, and designed to promote excellence in order that every individual may be afforded an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential.*
- WHEREAS,** Article VIII of the Louisiana Constitution vests the legislature with the overall responsibility “to provide for the education of the people of the state” and establishes the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) as the state body responsible for the “supervision and control of public elementary and secondary schools ... in accordance with law”;
- WHEREAS,** the State of Louisiana recognizes the vital interest of parents in the education of their children and the importance of fostering involvement between parents and schools;
- WHEREAS,** the legislature, in the performance of its overall constitutional responsibility for public education, has passed clear laws designed to facilitate parental involvement, assist student achievement, evaluate teachers based on value-added data, and establish an accountability system for schools and school districts, including:
- La. R.S. 17:406 et seq. (Family-School Partnership Act) to increase the collaboration of parents and schools,
 - Act 54 of the 2010 Legislative Session (teacher evaluations) provides that 50% of teacher evaluations must be based on student achievement data,
 - La. R.S. 17:10.1 (school and district accountability system) “which requires and supports student achievement in each public school” and “provide[s] clear standards and expectations for schools and schools systems so that assessment of their effectiveness will be understood”, and
 - La. R.S. 17:24.4 (...statewide standards for required subjects...) which requires BESE to implement standards-based assessments based on nationally-based content standards but does not specify any specific or particular assessment to utilize;
- WHEREAS,** BESE has chosen to utilize Common Core standards-based assessments developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (“PARCC”);
- WHEREAS,** beginning in March of this year, students statewide will be tested for the first time utilizing Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, (“PARCC”) standardized tests developed for Common Core;
- WHEREAS,** increasing numbers of Louisiana parents, teachers, and school districts are voicing concerns over Common Core and PARCC testing, and parents are exploring alternatives that are in the best interest of their children, including opting out of the PARCC test completely;
- WHEREAS,** BESE policy currently provides that students who do not take the PARCC test will receive a score of zero, impacting their own personal achievement, teacher evaluations, and school and district performance scores;

WHEREAS, nationally norm-referenced or other comparable assessments utilized by other states, and compliant with La. R.S. 17:24.4, are readily available in the marketplace and offer complete and abbreviated versions for the purpose of benchmarking, either of which can easily be administered as alternatives to the PARCC test;

WHEREAS, it is inherent upon BESE, pursuant to the clear statutory findings of law provided by the legislature, to avert the growing disruption to this year's assessments by offering alternative means of testing readily available in the marketplace and currently utilized by other states, in order to avoid the negative impacts to student achievement, the teacher evaluation system, and the school and district accountability system.

NOW, THEREFORE I, BOBBY JINDAL, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

SECTION 1: BESE is directed to adhere to the legislative findings in La. R.S. 17:406.1 regarding parental involvement, including “it has been clearly demonstrated that parental involvement in the schools is directly related to better student achievement, attitudes, and performance in school.”

SECTION 2: BESE is directed to adhere to the legislative purposes delineated in La. R.S. 17:10.1 regarding a school and district accountability system, including its purposes to “require and support student achievement in each public school” and to “provide clear standards and expectations for schools and school systems so that assessment of their effectiveness will be understood”, in order to avoid student achievement being negatively impacted by a score of zero (0) as a result of non-participation.

SECTION 3: BESE is directed to uphold the state accountability system established by La. R.S. 17:10.1 so that it accurately reflects student achievement, teacher quality, and school performance, and allows parents to act on their beliefs for the best interests of their children.

SECTION 4: **As a viable and necessary action, BESE is urged to grant districts the ability to offer nationally norm-referenced or other comparable assessment appropriate for Louisiana as an alternative to the PARCC test, including abbreviated versions for the purpose of benchmarking, rather than penalizing students, teachers and schools and jeopardizing our statewide accountability system.**

SECTION 5: All departments, commissions, boards, agencies, and political subdivisions of the state are authorized and directed to cooperate with the implementations of the provisions of this Order.

SECTION 6: This Order is effective upon signature and shall remain in effect until amended, modified, terminated or rescinded.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana, at the Capitol, in the city of Baton Rouge, on this 30th day of January, 2015.

/s/Bobby Jindal
GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

**ATTEST BY
THE GOVERNOR**

/s/ Tom Schedler
SECRETARY OF STATE